In the Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for pressing an object with a main piston placed in a main cylinder by means of applying a prescribed pressure to said main piston with working fluid wherein:

said working fluid is compressed to said prescribed pressure by supplying said working fluid to said main cylinder with driving power of a piezoelectric ~~element.~~ element,

said prescribed pressure is applied through a piping system that includes said main cylinder, a supply line and a discharge line of said working fluid with respect to said main cylinder, a check valve preventing reverse flow of said working fluid from said main cylinder to said supply line, and a sub-cylinder provided within said supply line, said method comprises:

a first step of displacing a sub-piston provided within said sub-cylinder from an initial position to press said working fluid such that said working fluid is introduced via said check valve to said main cylinder to displace said main piston provided within said main cylinder; and

a second step of causing said sub-piston to return to said initial position such that said working fluid is supplied to said sub-cylinder,

said first step and said second step are repeated successively until a pressure of said working fluid in said main cylinder reaches said prescribed pressure,

said first step is performed in a state in which a discharge control valve disposed in said discharge line and a supply control valve disposed in said supply line are closed,

said second step is performed in a state in which said discharge control valve and said check valve are closed and said supply control valve is open,

said supply control valve, said discharge control valve and said sub-piston each respectively have a respective said piezoelectric element attached thereto, and

said piezoelectric elements serve to open and close said supply control valve and said discharge control valve, and to displace said sub-piston from the initial position, respectively.

2. (currently amended) The pressing method according to claim 1, wherein a prescribed voltage is applied to said piezoelectric element attached to said sub-piston repeatedly until the pressure of said working fluid reaches to said prescribed pressure.

Claims 3 to 5 (canceled).

6. (currently amended) The pressing method according to ~~claim 3~~ claim 1, wherein

a detector provided in said main cylinder detects the pressure of said working fluid, and

when said detector detects said prescribed pressure, the displacement of said sub-piston is terminated.

Claims **7 to 17** (canceled).

18. (new) A method of pressing an object using an apparatus including a pressing piston device, a fluid supply line connected to a fluid inlet of said pressing piston device and adapted to supply a working fluid, a piezoelectrically actuated supply control valve interposed in said fluid supply line, a piezoelectrically actuated pump connected to or interposed in said fluid supply line between said supply control valve and said fluid inlet of said pressing piston device, a one-way check valve interposed in said fluid supply line between said pump and said fluid inlet of said pressing piston device, a fluid discharge line connected to a fluid outlet of said pressing piston device and adapted to discharge the working fluid from said pressing piston device, and a piezoelectrically actuated discharge control valve interposed in said fluid discharge line, wherein said method comprises the steps:

a) closing said check valve, electrically controlling said piezoelectrically actuated discharge control valve so as to be in a closed state thereof, and

electrically controlling said piezoelectrically actuated supply control valve so as to be in an open state thereof;

b) with said check valve closed, said discharge control valve in said closed state thereof and said supply control valve in said open state thereof, electrically controlling said piezoelectrically actuated pump to draw the working fluid through said supply control valve into said pump;

c) after said step b), electrically controlling said piezoelectrically actuated discharge control valve so as to be in said closed state thereof, and electrically controlling said piezoelectrically actuated supply control valve so as to be in a closed state thereof;

d) with said discharge control valve in said closed state thereof and said supply control valve in said closed state thereof, electrically controlling said piezoelectrically actuated pump so as to pressurize the working fluid in said pump, thereby opening said check valve, and pumping an amount of the working fluid from said pump through said check valve into said pressing piston device; and

e) repeating said steps a), b), c) and d) until a pressure of the working fluid in said pressing piston device reaches a prescribed pressure, thereby advancing a pressing piston of said pressing piston device so as to press the object.

19. (new) The method according to claim 18, wherein said controlling of said pump in said step d) comprises applying a first electrical voltage to a first piezoelectric actuator element of said pump, said controlling of said pump in said step b) comprises disconnecting said first electrical voltage from said first piezoelectric actuator element, said controlling of said supply control valve in said step c) comprises applying a second electrical voltage to a second piezoelectric actuator element of said supply control valve, said controlling of said supply control valve in said step a) comprises disconnecting said second electrical voltage from said second piezoelectric actuator element, and said controlling of said discharge control valve in said step a) and said step c) comprises applying a third electrical voltage to a third piezoelectric actuator element of said discharge control valve.

20. (new) The method according to claim 18, further comprising, after completing said pressing of said object in said step e), a further step of electrically controlling said piezoelectrically actuated discharge control valve so as to be in an open state thereof, and discharging a quantity of the working fluid out of said pressing piston device through said discharge control valve to retract said pressing piston.

21. (new) The method according to claim 18, further comprising sensing the pressure of the working fluid in said pressing piston device with a pressure sensor, and terminating said step d) when said pressure sensed with said pressure sensor reaches said prescribed pressure.

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